NORTEC
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD AND GOVERNING BOARD
MINUTES
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2025
GAIA HOTEL AND SPA
ANDERSON, CA

I. CALL TO ORDER

S. Marie, Workforce Development Board Chair, and Ric Leutwyler, Governing Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The pledge was recited.

III. ROLL CALL

There was a quorum of the Governing Board (GB) and quorum of Workforce Development Board (WDB). Roster

IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA (ACTION)

A motion by G. Mathew, seconded by R. Butler for WDB approval of the agenda, passed unanimously.

A motion by G. Bridges, seconded by E. Valenzuela for GB approval of the agenda, passed unanimously.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

NoRTEC Executive Director Michael Cross introduced NoRTEC's two new staff members. Accounting and Administrative Intern Itiel Acosta and Director of Workforce Programs Heather Chavez.

VI. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD APPOINTMENTS (ACTION)

New applications were reviewed to serve the following seats:

A. At-Large Community Based Organization Seat
Zoe Watson, nominated by the Sierra Institute.

B. At-Large Community Based Organization Seat
Blanca Barba, nominated by California Human Development.

C. At-Large Private Industry Organization Seat
Elizabeth Cavasso, nominated by the Alturas Chamber of Commerce.

D. Private Industry Seat – Del Norte County
Jon Perry, nominated by the Crescent City & Del Norte Chamber of Commerce.

A motion by E. Valenzuela, seconded by G. Bridges, for the Governing Board appointment of the four members seeking appointment to the NoRTEC Workforce Development Board, passed unanimously.

VII. UPCOMING WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD VACANCIES (INFORMATION)

NoRTEC Executive Director Michael Cross said that Butte County Director of Social Services Shelby Boston had taken a new role in Sacramento County and Tiffany Rowe has been appointed as the Interim Director and would like to serve on the WDB. Her nomination will be on the next Board meeting's agenda.

VIII. CONSENT AGENDA

Susan Marie reviewed the consent agenda items.

A motion by H. Oilar, seconded by D. Platz, for WDB approval of the consent agenda, passed unanimously.

A motion by G. Bridges, seconded by D. Short, for GB approval of the consent agenda, passed unanimously.

IX. NORTEC STRATEGIC GOALS (INFORMATION)

A. Key Objective #1 – Services Delivered – We are committed to providing high quality services that balance the needs of our clients with program-specific criteria. We understand that serving the needs of the rural communities is often more resource intensive and factor that into our service strategy.

NoRTEC Executive Director M. Cross explained NoRTEC is currently procuring WIOA Service Providers for the program year beginning July 1, 2025. Proposals were received from each of the three (3) existing NoRTEC Service Providers, and they were asked to provide a presentation to the Board to describe what their services will look like in each county they serve.

Presentations were given as follows:

1. Alliance for Workforce Development (AFWD) Executive Director Kristine ZuaZua provided a PowerPoint presentation that covered the strengths, challenges and opportunities for Butte, Lassen, Modoc, Nevada, Plumas, and Sierra counties.

2. SMART Workforce Center Executive Director Wendy Zanotelli provided a PowerPoint presentation that covered the strengths, challenges and opportunities for Del Norte, Trinity, Siskiyou, and Shasta counties.

3. Tehama County Job Training Center (JTC) Executive Director Carrie Ferchaud provided a PowerPoint presentation that covered the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for Tehama County.

X. PY 2024/2025 FUNDING (INFORMATION)

NoRTEC Executive Director M. Cross reviewed Program Year 2024/2025 funding. NoRTEC currently has over $16 million in available funds which is made up of about two million state funding and the rest is federal. The current situation is not considered secure, and it is unknown what will happen with funding in the future.

XI. PROGRAM REPORT (ACTION)

NoRTEC's Director of Workforce Programs Heather Chavez reviewed the program report.

A. Program Monitoring

H. Chavez said that on-site monitoring of service providers is scheduled for May 2025. Results of the visits will be reported to the Board when completed.

B. State/Federal Monitoring

H. Chavez explained the State has not scheduled regular program monitoring for the current program year, but NoRTEC will take part in the first cohort of Data Validation for PY 24/25.

C. Universal Services, Client Enrollment, and Contract Performance

1. Universal Services Tracking

H. Chavez reviewed the Career Center Visits report as presented in the agenda. She noted there are 500 more visitors reported compared to the same time last year. W. Meith asked for clarification about the dates and H. Chavez confirmed the report is cumulative with the second quarter data covering July to December.

2. Job Seekers Enrolled in the WIOA Program

H. Chavez reviewed the report as presented in the agenda.

3. WIOA Service Provider Contract Performance

a. PY 2024/2025 Second Quarter Performance

H. Chavez reviewed the PY 2024/2025 Second Quarter Performance as presented in the agenda. Two (2) of the six (6) goals are being met. Since there are still two (2) quarters remaining for the program year, there is no immediate need for concern, and NoRTEC staff will work with providers to track performance.

D. Plant Closure Update

H. Chavez reviewed the report as presented in the agenda. W. Meith said he would like to see the reasons for closures of businesses and those that are new or hiring, if possible.

E. Special Project Report

H. Chavez reviewed the Workforce Accelerator program and noted that it is the 7th award of Workforce Accelerator funding awarded to NoRTEC over the years. The project's focus is to provide English language acquisition services for English language learner populations across the region as part of their pre-employment skills activities. Language services are provided to partners to support individuals integrating into the country or those who need language help and prepares individuals for work, especially in the manufacturing industry. NoRTEC just received notification they are now cleared to enroll clients.

F. Headline Program Reports

H. Chavez encouraged Board members to click on the links as presented in the agenda to view success stories and other activities that service providers are doing in their communities.

G. Staff Training

H. Chavez and other provider staff will attend an apprentice development training next month hosted by the California Workers Association. John Wilson asked what the California Workforce Association development apprenticeship is and if it has anything to do with the California Building Trades (CBT). H. Chavez said it is a membership association for people who work in workforce development throughout the state. They host annual conferences, and they are not associated with CBT, but they are a partner.

R. Butler made the motion for the WDB to approve the second quarter program report; R. Richardson seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

D. Short made the motion for the GB to approve second quarter program report; G. Bridges seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

XII. AUTHORIZATION TO CONTRACT WITH WIOA SERVICE PROVIDERS (ACTION)

RFP Ad Hoc Committee (Committee) member M. Clarno gave an overview of the results of the RFP selection committee. Three (3) proposals were received from the current service providers and they each proposed to continue with their current service areas. The Committee recommended allowing staff to enter contract negotiations with JTC and AFWD but recommended delaying the decision on SMART until additional information could be obtained to clarify their response to the RFP.

M. Clarno opened the floor for questions. WDB and GB members held lengthy discussions about recommendations for the action to be taken. Some members did not want SMART to have to wait until the next Board meeting (May 22, 2025) to be approved, while others wanted to accept the recommendation of the Committee to allow time to obtain additional information.

Action was taken as follows:

Dena Platz made the motion for the WDB to authorize staff to enter contract negotiations with (1) Alliance for Workforce Development to serve Butte, Lassen, Modoc, Plumas, Nevada and Sierra Counties; (2) Job Training Center of Tehama County to serve Tehama County; and (3) SMART Workforce Center, pending additional information and approval by the Ad Hoc Committee no later than the 30th of March. Joe Wilson seconded the motion. The motion passed by majority with two nays from R. Richardson and H. Oilar.

Darrin Short made the motion for the GB to authorize staff to enter into contract negotiations with (1) Alliance For Workforce Development to serve Butte, Lassen, Modoc, Plumas, Nevada and Sierra Counties; (2) Job Training Center of Tehama County to serve Tehama County; and (3) SMART Workforce Center pending additional information and approval by the Ad Hoc Committee no later than the 30th of March; Gary Bridges seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

XIII. AJCC CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT PLANS (INFORMATIONAL)

NoRTEC Assistant Director Andrea Campos presented on the AJCC Continual Improvement Plans. She explained that at the October Board meeting, each job center was evaluated and certified for compliance with the State's Comprehensive AJCC Certification process. Based on the Board assessment across seven indicators of continual improvement, NoRTEC had to develop annual Continual Improvement Plans (CIPs) with actionable goals for each job center. The CIPs highlight areas where job centers can continually improve service delivery for consistency throughout the region. Quarterly updates are provided to the Board on progress toward achieving the annual goals for each AJCC.

There were no questions or discussion.

XIV. STATUS OF FUNDING APPLICATIONS (INFORMATION)

H. Chavez presented Status of Funding Applications.

A. New Applications

NoRTEC applied for funding through the EDD Department of Rehabilitation, for a Disability Access, Equity and Inclusion (DAEI) grant for 1.5 million dollars for the purpose of allowing NoRTEC to strengthen partnerships with agencies who serve people with disabilities to increase employment and self-sufficiency rates.

G. Mathew asked if the application had already been sent and H. Chavez said yes.

L. Russell made a motion for the WDB to approve the application submission to the state for $1.5 million for the DAEI grant; J. Wilson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

G. Bridges made the motion for the GB to approve the application submission to the state for $1.5 million for the DAEI grant; S. Starr seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Prior Approval

There were no applications.

XV. OLD BUSINESS (INFORMATION)

There was no old business

XVI. NEW BUSINESS (INFORMATION)

S. Marie reviewed the next meetings as follows:

The next board meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 22, 2025, at the Canyon Oaks Country Club in Chico.

The following board meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 28, 2025. A location has yet to be decided.

A. Other New Business

S. Marie asked if there was any new business.

R. Leutwyler gave an overview of a conference he attended at Chico State in which Dr. Eyler presented information on data about population and employment changes. R. Leutwyler raised ideas of an economic needs assessment, regional economic development plans and seeing data points that are relevant to the decisions the Board makes. He asked if it would be something the group is interested in, and many said yes.

XVII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 1:04 pm.